1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

224 coarse and unhealthy and even is taboo. The Miskito call it *tilba*, which name is already mentioned at the end of the seventeenth century in the form *tilbu* (M. W.: 311).

LIZARDS.—The largest lizard is the green iguana (*Iguana tuberculata*) which is generally shot while feeding on the river banks or in the branches of some overhanging tree. Sometimes it tries to escape by dashing into the water, where the Indians attempt to catch it by diving after it. It is sometimes kept alive by the Indians until required for food. For this purpose they break the thighs and arm-bones, and put the backbone out of joint; or else they twist the legs and tie the front ones over the back and the hind ones over the tail by their own sinews. The poor animal is thus unable to run away. The eggs of the iguana are also highly esteemed.

BIRDS.—Various species of guans (*Penelope*, *Ortalis*, *Pipile* [49]), the yellow-crested black curassows (*Crax* sp.), mountain hens (*Tinamus* sp.), quails (*Ortyx* sp.), partridges (*Odontophorus* sp.), pigeons (*Columba* sp.), and wild ducks (*Cairina moschata*) are esteemed as game birds.

224 RETURN FROM THE CHASE.—After the chase the game is carried on
482 the back to the canoe. When a large animal, as a peccary, has been killed each fore and hind foot are tied together with the aid of withes. The Indian, putting his arms through the loops thus formed, with the beast's head downward, carries it on the back, as if shouldering a knapsack. A strap passing over the forehead may also be attached to help support the load. If the hunters are unable to carry all the game at one time the remainder is hung on the branches of some tree, to keep it out of reach of prowling animals.

224 Arrived at his settlement, the Indian merely takes his arms and paddle and walks home, sending his wife down to the waterside to fetch the game. The hair of the latter is then singed by a fire made in the open. The neighbors, who are generally near relatives, receive a share of the meat.

● 261 Then a big pot is put on the fire, for the Indians do not think of the morrow and, if possible, consume all the meat at once. The women and children do not have patience enough to wait until it is cooked, but they cut off small slices, which they roast over the hot coals and eat, with a few bananas or plantains. If they are unable to dispose of all the supply on the first day the remainder is barbecued without salt over a slow fire. (See Culinary Arts.)

224 HUNTING CHARMS.—Many charms are used for luck in hunting.
111 Stones or pebbles, found in the stomach of certain animals, are

[49] The large guan (*Penelope* sp.) is called *kuamu* by the Miskito, a name found already by M. W. (311) in the form *quaumoss*.

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

CULINARY ARTS: METHODS OF FOOD PREPARATION

262 These Indians obtain their food from agriculture, hunting, fishing, and by gathering the wild fruits of the forest. Among the Miskito living near the coast the staple food is sweet cassava, but in the other regions of the country its place is occupied by bananas; among the Sumu maize also plays a great rôle.

252 While at home the men never do any cooking and would consider such an act beneath their dignity, but after the return from the chase they barbecue the meat which is not to be consumed immediately.

● 261 The Indian has an enormous appetite when there is plenty of food, especially fish and meat, at hand; on the other hand, in case of food shortage, they are able to travel and work with scarcely anything to eat.

264 SERVING OF THE MEAL.—No regularity is observed in eating, but food may be taken at any time. When the meal is ready the grown-up men are served first in their hammocks with the best and largest shares. A calabash of broth or soup (M.: *pilali;* S.: *di wasni, di wasba*) and a bijagua leaf containing salt is also taken to them. The women and children eat together; they sit on the ground, forming a circle around the remainder of the food, which is spread upon a layer of large leaves. There is, as a rule, little left when the men have been served, but the women and children have taken their share previously. While the pot is boiling they crowd around the fire, and keep on eating little bits of meat together with plantains or bananas roasted in the hot ashes. The Indians do not speak much during meals; a visitor is never questioned while he is eating, as that would be a breach of etiquette.

262 [252] ANIMAL FOOD.—Meat and fish are either boiled with water or roasted in the hot ashes. The meat is obtained from the chase; the Miskito living on the edge of the savannas also own cattle which they slaughter for meat. Other domestic animals, as pigs and fowls, are seldom eaten, but are commonly sold to strangers; this is also the case with fowl eggs. The Indians, as a rule, do not care much for the flesh and products of animals of foreign origin. Certain indigenous animals are taboo. The favorite meat of both tribes is the red monkey (*Ateles* sp.) and the white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu* sp.).

262 252 The Sumu sometimes eat frogs (M.: *burka;* S.: *burka, burki*), removing their skin first in the hot ashes; to the Miskito this amphibian is taboo. Birds' eggs are eaten, even when they are practically rotten, but the eggs of the domestic fowls are not esteemed. The winged females of the leaf-carrying ants (*Atta cephalotes* syn. *Oecodoma cephalotes;* M.: *wiwi;* S.: *isdak*) are also caught when

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

The eating of earth (M.: *tasba;* S.: *sdû*), clay (M.: *sldûbla;* S.: *sdû*), sand (M.: *dûya;* S.: *kdûhmak*), and charcoal (M.: *kwasko, tnasko;* S.: *kusmak*) is very common among women and children. 261

NONFERMENTED BEVERAGES

DRINKING WATER.—The whole country is well watered and the Indians obtain their drinking water from the running streams on the banks of which their settlements are generally situated. Wells are also dug by those living near the sea. 312

WATER LIANAS.—Several varieties of water lianas, varying in size from 3 to 5 inches, can be found throughout the forest. When the stem is merely cut through only a few drops of water will issue; the vine must then be severed immediately about 2 or 3 feet farther down, whereupon a continual stream of water will flow, quite sufficient to quench the thirst of a person. The Indian holds the severed part of the stem in a vertical position, allowing the sap to run directly into the mouth. The vine must be cut above first, otherwise the sap will ascend so rapidly that hardly any will be obtained.

HONEY.—The Indians are very fond of the honey (M.: *naema;* S.: *aiwak*) from the various species of wild, stingless bees which make their nests in hollow trees. The entrance to the nest is easily ascertained by watching the little bees flying about. The Indians either climb or fell the tree in order to get possession of the honey. The latter is always taken as a beverage, after being mixed with water, but even in its natural state it is not viscid, but almost as fluid as water. It has a subacid, highly fragrant taste. The Indians, while away from home, may make a meal of the contents of such a bee nest, but the average foreigner does not care much for it, and finds it greatly inferior to that of the European domesticated bee. The natives collect in bamboo joints what they are unable to consume immediately to take home to their family. 222

MILK.—The consumption of cow's milk is not general. When I inquired the reason from some Sumu of the upper Rio Waspuk they answered that they are not the descendants of cows, to drink their milk. 272

BANANAS AND PLANTAINS.—A great variety of nourishing drinks of vegetable origin are prepared by the Indians under consideration. Bananas are consumed largely in the shape of a pop, known locally by the name "wabul." The bananas for this purpose are used generally in the green state, before their contained starch has turned into sugar. They are peeled and cooked in an iron pot. Then the water is poured off and the bananas are thoroughly mashed in the same pot with the aid of a short wooden stick. During this process cold water is added little by little, and the whole is well stirred. No salt